

**WORLDWIDE TERRORISM AND
VIOLENT CRIMINAL ATTACKS
AGAINST TRANSPORTATION - 1996**



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WORLDWIDE TERRORISM AND VIOLENT CRIMINAL ATTACKS AGAINST TRANSPORTATION - 1996

Summary. Transportation and transportation infrastructures worldwide remain a prominent target of violent attacks, by both terrorist and criminal elements. There were **702** violent incidents against transportation worldwide in **1996**, including international terrorism, indigenous or domestic terrorism, and criminal attacks – of these **92** were international terrorist incidents, almost one-third of the total international terrorist attacks.¹ Attacks on surface transportation, including maritime, accounted for **90** percent of these incidents. While U.S. interests are often targets for terrorist attacks, fewer than two percent of the violence against transportation actually occurred within the United States. As attacks against transportation have increased, so have the number of resulting casualties. We believe that terrorist attacks on public transportation are often intended to produce mass casualties, fear, and disruption. The source of violent attacks against transportation – whether defined as “international” or “indigenous” terrorist attacks, or as violent criminal actions – is far less important than the effect such violence has on innocent victims and the operation of transportation systems.

I. INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AGAINST TRANSPORTATION

A bomb attack against a country’s embassy or an armed attack against a political official are obvious international terrorist incidents with a readily apparent target. Terrorist attacks against transportation are more difficult to categorize. Many nationalities may be present in an airport terminal, or on a bus in a major city and the people harmed in an attack may be the terrorist’s ultimate target and are used as a tool to create fear, disrupt economic activity, and make a government appear unable to provide public security. Attacks against transportation indiscriminately claim their victims and any person who travels for work or pleasure may become a victim. Nearly one-third of the **296** international terrorist incidents in **1996** were against transportation modes or related infrastructure. Nearly one-half of these were bomb attacks against international owned oil and gas pipelines.

Terrorist Threats. The principal terrorist threats we are likely to confront come **from** state sponsors of terrorism, international terrorist groups, and violent extremist elements. Through their resources, these groups have access to intelligence, weapons, training, and **financing**. Their members are dedicated to their organization’s or party’s causes and are

¹ No one definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance. For the purposes of this report we have chosen the definition of terrorism contained in Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(1), which defines “terrorism” as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against ~~noncombatant~~ targets by ~~subnational~~ groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. The term “international terrorism” means terrorism involving ~~citizens~~ or the territory of more than one country. “Domestic” or “indigenous” terrorism involves groups or individuals whose activities are directed at ~~elements of their own government or population without foreign involvement~~. Criminal attacks are ~~unlawful acts committed~~ for personal motives and not necessarily political in nature.

II. WORLDWIDE VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Transportation's Office of Intelligence and Security (**OIS**) recorded **702** worldwide violent acts against transportation in **1996**. This represents the highest number of incidents recorded since **OIS** began collecting and analyzing data in **1991**. This was a **30** percent increase over **1995**. Seven of the nine transportation categories reviewed experienced an increase in violent incidents from **1995** to **1996**. The largest rise in incidents (**147**) occurred in the maritime arena. This is attributed to growing acts of piracy, as recorded by the International Maritime Bureau (**IMB**), which reached a six-year high. A decrease in attacks against subway systems may be explained, in part, by counter-terrorist successes of the French and Japanese governments against terrorist groups who directed campaigns specifically at the Paris and Tokyo subway systems. "Other" attacks also decreased, this is attributed to fewer arson attacks against Turkish travel agencies and airline ticketing offices in Western Europe by Kurdistan Workers' Party (**PKK**) militants.

Transportation trends. As violent attacks against transportation have become more frequent, casualties have increased. There was no single "spectacular" attack against transportation in **1996** -- such as Pan Am **103** or the Tokyo subway **sarin** gas attacks -- which produced hundreds of deaths or thousands of wounded. Nevertheless, the increased number of casualties resulting from attacks on transportation suggests that incidents are becoming more lethal. We believe that these increased losses are a result of both the choice of "softer" targets and the intent to cause mass casualties.

Armed assaults were the most prevalent form of attack against transportation. The vast majority of armed assaults were acts of piracy in the maritime arena. Bombings and firebombings, historically the most common method of attack for terrorists, figured prominently in attacks on transportation as well, targeting all modes. There has been a downward trend in hijackings, air piracy, and kidnappings. Latin America led all regions in transportation attacks. Pipelines were a frequent target of bombings in Colombia. Insurgents in both Colombia and Peru repeatedly disrupted transportation with roadblocks and highway ambushes. In Southeast Asia piracy was prevalent. Europe experienced firebombings and arson attacks against Turkish travel agencies and airline ticketing offices.

Aviation. Although aviation accounted for only **10** percent of the attacks on transportation, historically aviation has been a "high profile" target for terrorists. There have been no terrorist team hijacking of **U.S.** air carriers since **1986**, and no successful bombings of **U.S.** carriers since Pan Am **103** in December **1988**. Security countermeasures have made aviation less vulnerable to terrorism than other modes of transportation. Nevertheless, U.S. commercial air carriers and their aircraft will remain attractive targets because aircraft are fragile, high-value assets readily identifiable with specific countries, which can be counted on to be at predetermined locations at particular times. Consequently, the destruction of an airliner, or even a credible threat to destroy an airliner generates enormous publicity because it is the type of terrorist attack which strikes at persons from all walks of life and to which everyone can relate psychologically.

Bus and Rail. Buses and rail remained popular targets for terrorist attacks. We believe that this is because the number of vehicles and structures makes them nearly impossible to defend; they follow set schedules and routes, and are regularly anticipated to be at a certain place at a certain time; they are soft targets; the economic impact of destroying the infrastructure could be significant; large numbers of people can be affected by a single attack; and the media impact of an incident can be tremendous. Also it is relatively easy for the terrorists to escape after planting a bomb or conducting a standoff attack against a bus or a train. These factors are all primary considerations for a terrorist.

Maritime Terrorism. There were thirteen maritime terrorist attacks against ships, ports, and other maritime-related targets in **1996**. These attacks occurred in France, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Colombia, and Switzerland. All but four of these attacks were conducted by indigenous terrorist groups, who have little or no capability to conduct similar attacks outside their home countries. None of the four international terrorist attacks were against U.S. interests. Most known international terrorist groups have no history of attacks against maritime targets, and have little training or experience in a maritime environment. Nevertheless, the large number of Americans sailing on international cruises provides an attractive and easy target to terrorists seeking revenge against the **U.S.**, or to cause mass casualties. Historically, maritime attacks or hijackings have occurred primarily in southern Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and Asia.

Piracy. Acts of piracy accounted for the majority of violence in the maritime arena. Piracy rose to a record **165** incidents in **1996** (the **IMB** recorded **175**, but **10** of these incidents could not be confirmed and were not entered into the **OIS** database). The greatest number of attacks was in Indonesia, which has seen a steady growth in reported attacks since **1993**. Thailand and other locations in Southeast Asia also experienced increased levels of piracy. Brazil had the second largest number of reported incidents, with many occurring in coastal waters. The attacks in Brazil and many of the attacks in Indonesia involved armed pirates using varying degrees of violence. There were four reports of vessels hijacked, two in Southeast Asia, one in the Red Sea, and one off the coast of Somalia. The primary motive for hijacking vessels in Southeast Asia is believed to be the **theft** of the vessel and/or cargoes. The overall rise in attacks came despite a decrease in reported cases from China, Hong Kong, and **Macao**. Piracy attacks are becoming more open and more violent, an issue of serious concern to shipping and seamen. All nationalities and types of vessels have been attacked. Among the flags most affected are Cyprus, Liberia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, and Singapore.

PIPELINES – In **1996** attacks against pipelines worldwide increased to **61** from **55** in **1995**. These attacks accounted for approximately **9** percent of all violence against the various transportation modes. The majority of pipeline attacks occurred in Colombia, where indigenous guerrillas attacked oil pipelines owned by a consortium of international **companies**. In Turkey, Kurdish insurgent guerrillas conducted a significant number of attacks on pipelines. In addition, attacks on pipelines in Algeria and the **trans-Caucasus** region are becoming more frequent. Pipelines likely will remain a preferred target for attacks because they are an easy target, they traverse miles of isolated territory, and they

is no less significant. Attacks against these assets target the economic and transportation infrastructure, and can isolate agricultural or manufacturing regions from important markets; cut off needed supplies from recipients; and/or sever communications between population centers and outlying areas.

Casualties. The number of casualties resulting from attacks against transportation systems is perhaps equally as significant as the total number of attacks against transportation. There were **926** persons killed and additional **1,805** injured in violent acts against transportation in **1996**. The number of persons killed in **1996** is up slightly ~~from~~ **1995**, while injuries declined dramatically from roughly **8,000** in **1995**. The total number of injuries in **1995** was unusually high because of the series of rush-hour attacks on subways both in Japan and France, when ridership is highest. In Japan alone **5,000** people were hospitalized following a series of ~~saran~~ **sarin** gas attacks. There were no such “spectacular” attacks in **1996** which produced hundreds of dead or thousands of wounded.. Attacks on buses registered the highest number of fatalities with **593** killed and **799** injured, followed by attacks on rail with **170** killed and **802** injured; **102** were killed and **93** injured in attacks on highways; **33** were killed and **81** injured in attacks on aviation; **13** were killed and **95** injured in attacks on subways, 9 were killed and 9 injured in maritime attacks; 5 were killed and 3 injured in attacks against bridges; and 1 person was killed and **3** injured in ~~“Other”~~ attacks.

The trend in casualties suggests incidents are becoming more lethal. The growing casualty figures are a result of both the choice of “softer” targets and the use of weaponry that is intended to cause mass casualties. Civilian targets are becoming increasingly popular, as well-protected diplomatic and military targets are causing terrorist to divert and look for easier targets. In addition, the use of certain weaponry, such as the **sarin** gas in Tokyo and massive high-explosive vehicle bombs like the one used in Oklahoma City, are augmenting the casualty toll.

Impact. The impact of attacks against transportation can be both psychological and economic. Violence, especially a sustained campaign, may generate fear and anxiety among the public, causing people to alter their lifestyles and, in some cases, limit discretionary travel. Such attacks **affect** people ~~from all~~ walks of life, making everyone who uses public transportation feel vulnerable to terrorism and undermining public confidence in the government’s ability to protect its citizens. A series of bombings on buses and bus stops in Israel in **1996** severely impacted ridership and public morale. In France ridership on the Paris subway dropped substantially **after** a series of bombings in **1995**, and remains below **pre-1995** levels.

Attacks on transportation and infrastructure can also have a significant economic impact. Terrorist attacks make governments and corporations divert vast amounts of scarce resources to security measures. Commerce may be ~~halted~~ for hours, days, or even weeks as transportation systems are shut down because of threats or attacks. Without transportation, critical goods and services may be cut off from markets. When the Provisional Irish Republican Army (**PIRA**) bombed and threatened bombings against

increase in the number of violent attacks against transportation in the **1990s** reflects a growing threat to transportation and the transportation infrastructure. There is every reason to believe that all of the various modes of transportation will continue to be attractive targets to various terrorist groups. Moreover, transportation will continue to be subject to criminal acts by individuals acting in furtherance of personal goals.

Methodology

This report is focused on providing the reader an analysis of violent attacks against transportation and the transportation infrastructure. The purpose is to identify current trends, and present some discussion on major events. The statistical reviews are broken into two separate categories: 1) International Terrorist Attacks Against Transportation - this data includes only those incidents which were classified as “international terrorist attacks” by the Incident Review Panel of the IICT; 2) Worldwide Violent Acts Against Transportation - this data includes not only the international terrorist attacks, but also indigenous terrorist attacks as well as some violent criminal attacks against transportation. The material used in this analysis was compiled from a variety of intelligence and media sources, reporting on a broad range of international and indigenous terrorist and non-terrorist attacks, and is intended to provide as comprehensive a picture of attacks on transportation as possible.

are virtually unprotected. The economic and environmental impact of attacking oil and gas pipelines can be significant.

Highways. Attacks on highways comprised **12** percent of worldwide violence against transportation. The two most popular tactics used in highway attacks include: **1)** mining, which indiscriminately targets all passing vehicles and pedestrians, be they civilian or military; **2)** roadblocks, where terrorists or guerrillas disrupt all transportation along highway, hijack vehicles, rob passengers, steal cargo, take hostages, and/or destroy vehicles and kill passengers. The areas where highway attacks are most prominent include Colombia, Turkey, Algeria, Lebanon, and Cambodia.

WORLDWIDE VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST TRANSPORTATION *

	<u>1996 (percent)</u>		<u>percent change</u>	<u>1995 (percent)</u>	
Pipelines	61	(9)	(11)	55	(11)
Aviation ²	71	(10)	(15)	62	(12.5)
Bus	163	(24)	(58)	103	(21)
Maritime	184	(26)	(397)	37	(7.5)
Subway	8	(1)	(-80)	41	(8)
Rail	79	(11)	(4)	76	(15)
Highways	87	(12)	(102)	43	(9)
Bridges	17	(2)	(240)	5	(1)
**Other	33	(5)	(-57)	76	(15)
Total	702	(100)		498	(100)

(CHART 2)

*This data includes the totals from International Terrorist Attacks Against Transportation.

**Other includes attacks on travel agencies, Transportation Ministries, transportation officials, and transportation fuel supplies.

Bridges and Tunnels. While attacks on bridges and tunnels occur less frequently (approximately 2 percent) than other types of attacks against transportation, their impact

² OIS include attacks on both private and commercial aircraft, attacks on counternarcotics aircraft and transportation officials, and bombs discovered and deactivated. Thus, this total may differ from the numbers reported by the Federal Aviation Administration in "Criminal Acts Against Civil Aviation - 1996."

mission oriented. They have great flexibility in choosing when and where to attack.

Middle Eastern terrorist groups have established infrastructures worldwide. In the United States the activities of these groups have included illegal fund raising, weapons training, bomb making, robbery, extortion, counterfeiting money and documents, providing safehavens, and other criminal activity.

Terrorism Trends. The **motivations** of terrorists are changing, and that is contributing to the increased threat to U.S. citizens and property. Terrorists today are motivated not just by political ideology but increasingly by ethnic and religious intolerance and hatred. The goal of many ethnic and religious terrorists does not appear to be political dominance, but rather the complete destruction of their chosen enemies. **Targeting** is changing. Critical economic infrastructures and transportation are gaining in prominence as terrorist targets. **Capabilities** are changing. Technology is making it easier to conceal and disguise explosive devices. Where old technology is being used, it is being improved upon. Terrorists are constructing bigger and more deadly bombs. Terrorism is becoming more indiscriminate and lethal. The use of **sarin** gas by the **Aum Shinrikyo** religious cult in the Tokyo subway system was the first large-impact use by terrorists of a weapon of mass destruction against innocent civilians. Experts believe similar attacks are possible in the future. As international terrorist attacks have decreased in the last several years, the percentage of attacks against transportation has increased.

Using data from "**Patterns of Global Terrorism – 1996**," attacks against transportation systems accounted for nearly one-third (**92**) of all international terrorist incidents in **1996**.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST TRANSPORTATION				
	<u>1996 (percent)</u>		<u>1995 (percent)</u>	
Pipelines	45	(49)	55	(31)
Aviation	8	(9)	11	(6)
Bus	5	(5)	8	(4)
Maritime	4	(4)	0	(0)
Subway	1	(1)	23	(13)
Rail	0	(0)	5	(3)
Highways	3	(3)	0	(0)
Bridges	0	(0)	0	(0)
**Other	27	(29)	76	(43)
Total	92	(100)	178	(100)

(CHART 1)

****Other includes attacks on travel agencies, Transportation Ministries, transportation officials, and transportation fuel supplies.**